

Bateria de San Antonio
Near the northeast corner of the intersection
of San Carlos and Hovey Roads
Pensacola Naval Air Station
Pensacola
Escambia County
Florida

HABS No. FLA-144

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

BATERIA DE SAN ANTONIO

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Location: Near the northeast corner of the intersection of San Carlos and Hovey Roads, Pensacola Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Escambia County, Florida

Present Owner: U. S. Government, Department of Interior, National Park Service

Present Use: Unoccupied

Statement of Significance: This semicircular masonry fortification was designed and built as a shore battery in conjunction with Castillo de San Carlos as part of the late eighteenth century Spanish defense system of the entrance channel to Pensacola Bay from the Gulf of Mexico.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Pensacola Bay was discovered by the Spanish adventurer, Panfilo de Narvaez, who landed on the south shore of Santa Rosa Island in October of 1528. Don Tristan de Luna y Arellano attempted to establish a permanent settlement in 1559, which was abandoned in 1561. In 1698, after a 1693 expedition by Don Carlos de Siguenza y Gongora, Spaniards resettled on the shores of Pensacola Bay and Austrian engineer Jaime Franck built a pine log, field redoubt, San Carlos de Austria, on the bluff called la barranca which overlooked the entrance channel of the bay. After contesting for the bay in 1719, the French destroyed the Spanish fortifications in 1720 and occupied the area until 1722. When the Spanish returned a new fortification was built on Santa Rosa Island, which was maintained until a hurricane destroyed the site in 1752. The survivors built a new blockhouse at a slightly higher elevation on Santa Rosa, though some established themselves at the blockhouse called Fort San Miguel at the present site of the city of Pensacola. In 1756 the viceroy of New Spain, the Marques de las Amarillas, established the presidio calling it San Miguel de las Amarillas. This induced the king of Spain in 1757 to proclaim by a royal order that the name "Panzacola" would be used. The village and the San Miguel and the Santa Rosa Island fortifications were turned over to the British in 1763 after the Treaty of Paris. The British built a small stockade with a ditch

on Barrancas as part of their fortifications of the bay. All of Pensacola's defenses, including Fort George and its redoubts, were surrendered to Spanish forces in the siege of 1781 and were officially turned over to Spain in 1783. By 1796 it was necessary to refortify the deteriorating defenses of the bay. The masonry Bateria de San Antonio was constructed in conjunction with the stockade, Castillo de San Carlos at the rear of the battery.

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After Spain ceded Louisiana to France in 1801 and France sold it to the United States in 1803, the stockade on Barrancas was strengthened to defend Pensacola, the provincial capital of Spanish West Florida, from an American invasion, which almost took place in 1813. In 1814 a British command, with the consent of the Pensacola commandant, occupied Fort San Miguel, and the Castillo de San Carlos. Following General Andrew Jackson's invasion of Florida in 1814 to quell Indian insurrections, Fort San Miguel and Pensacola were captured. The British retreated to San Carlos, destroyed it and spiked the guns of San Antonio, and then sailed away leaving the area to Jackson. The United States returned Pensacola to Spain. A stockade was rebuilt near the San Carlos site which, together with the bay, was surrendered again to American forces under Andrew Jackson in 1818 and was returned to Spain early in 1819. The deteriorating defenses of the bay were officially transferred to the United States in 1821 when East and West Florida were ceded by Spain. U. S. troops were garrisoned on Barrancas until 1825 when the area was turned over to the Department of the Navy.

The Territory of Florida officially sold the peninsula between Bayou Grande and the Pensacola Bay, which included Barrancas, to the United States for a Naval Reserve in 1832. On the site of Castillo de San Carlos, the U. S. Department of Engineers built, for the Department of the Navy, Fort Barrancas (HABS No. FLA-143) which was connected to the Bateria de San Antonio, itself largely rebuilt. The Department of the Navy lands were transferred to the War Department in 1844. Fort Barrancas was held by the Confederates from January of 1861 to May of 1862 when it was recaptured by Union troops. The brick fortifications on Barrancas were abandoned after the Civil War, though the U. S. Army maintained the area, collectively known as Fort Barrancas, until 1947 when it was turned over to the U. S. Naval Air Station. The National Park Service acquired Bateria de San Antonio and Fort Barrancas as part of the National Seashores July 1, 1972.

2. Date of erection: 1797-98

3. Architect: The bateria and the adjacent castillo were possibly designed by Vincente Folch y Juan, the Commandant of Pensacola. HABS
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4. Original plans and construction information: A 1796 plan drawn by Francisco P. Gelabert, also possibly the designer, indicates the original plan of the bateria and the stockade of the castillo. The general form of the existing battery is reflected in the plan.
5. Alterations and additions: Between 1839 and 1844 the U. S. Department of Engineers, under the supervision of W. H. Chase, altered the bateria with extensive additions to the earlier Spanish masonry, though the general plan was preserved. The firing platform was rebuilt and the terreplein was adapted for thirteen guns. The original Spanish structure, which was stuccoed, was embellished with ornamental architectural detailing including aileron enframements of roundel openings over the doors of the bombproofs and a moulded cornice above the roundels. The stucco also applied on 19th century work has deteriorated. The south rampart of the firing platform has collapsed into the parade.
6. Important old views: Included with this photo-data book is an undated photocopy of an early view of the south rampart of the firing platform. The view clearly indicates the detailing of the stucco ornament of "Fort San Carlos," which is hand written on the plate on the brick stringer of the stairway to the firing platform.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

Vincente Folch y Juan, commandant of Pensacola between 1795 and 1810, was born in Reus, Catalonia, Spain, in 1754. Folch, who studied mathematics at the Royal Military Academy of Barcelona, was appointed a sub-lieutenant in 1771 and served in the Light Infantry of Catalonia for twelve years. During that period he participated in the Siege of Mililla, an expedition to Algiers, and the 1780 blockade of Gibraltar. From 1783 to 1795 he was a member of the Louisiana Infantry and was stationed at New Orleans. Folch was in the Cuban Infantry for two years and received his last commission to Brigadier in 1810. His military record, which in 1815 described him as being in good health and married also noted that he was intelligent, had demonstrated valour, had good application and capacity, and displayed average conduct.

After the Treaty of 1783 the New Orleans commandant, Bernardo de Galvez, who governed West Florida, abandoned several of the

British fortifications around Pensacola. The Queen's Redoubt of Fort George, renamed Fort San Bernardo, was officially maintained. In 1788 though it was proposed to abandon the Pensacola site altogether and relocate the presidio at the bay entrance channel, the officially approved scheme was not instituted. By 1793, when Spain entered another European war, the deteriorated fortifications were proposed to be augmented with the construction of a masonry redoubt and battery on Barrancas. When the European warfare abruptly ended so did the project. It was revived after Spain declared war on England. A council of war in New Orleans authorized early in 1797 the construction of a seven-gun, masonry battery or medialuna on Barrancas. The battery's rear defense was planned as the Castillo de San Carlos, which held only 150 men, and was built within the earlier British ditch. Construction on the bateria and castillo continued during 1797 even though a blockading British squadron captured artillery and supplies being shipped from New Orleans.

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In 1825 it was necessary to fortify the Navy Yard and provide a strong defense point on the Gulf Coast. The U. S. Department of Engineers which had few men skilled in the design of coastal fortifications, finally selected William H. Chase to design and build the forts of Pensacola Bay. In part, Chase's scheme, a development of the earlier Spanish defense system, adapted Bateria de San Antonio for mid-nineteenth century warfare. It was backed up and connected to Fort Barrancas, which was built on the site of Castillo de San Carlos. Both were surrendered, along with the other mainland forts, Redoubt and McRee, to the Florida and Alabama militia on January 12, 1861. Confederate troops held the fortifications until May 10, 1862, when they were recaptured by Union forces. Like the other forts in the area, Bateria de San Antonio was abandoned after the Civil War.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

National Archives, Cartographic Division (NNCS), Drawer 79, Fortification File, Sheet 4, "Plan of Fort San Carlos de Barrancas," 1838.

-----, Sheet 7, "Sketch of the Site of Old and New Fort San Carlos de Barrancas....," 1840.

For additional information which may pertain to Bateria de San Antonio after it became United States property, see the primary sources cited for Fort Barrancas (HABS No. FLA-143).

2. Secondary and published sources:

Faye, Stanley. "The Spanish and British Fortifications of Pensacola, 1698-1821," The Pensacola Historical Quarterly (April 1972).

Holmes, Jack D. L. Honor and Fidelity, Louisiana Infantry Regiment and the Louisiana Militia Companies, 1766-1821. Birmingham, Alabama: 1965.

Prepared by Rodd L. Wheaton
Architect, HABS
1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. General Description: This semicircular masonry structure, designed as a shore battery, is a typical eighteenth century fortification with the major elements of a glacis, counterscarp, dry ditch, rampart, terreplein, and parade which contains vaulted bombproofs below a firing platform. A postern tunnel connects the parade to Fort Barrancas (HABS No. FLA-143). The condition of the fabric is good, though the south rampart of the firing platform has collapsed into the parade.
- B. Technical Description:
1. Overall dimensions: From the counterscarp to the traverse wall it measures, on a north-south axis, 138'-0". On an east-west axis it measures 230'-6" from counterscarp to counterscarp.
 2. Construction: The retaining and bearing walls are built of brick of various sizes, colors, and consistencies and includes flat Spanish brick, standard nineteenth century brick and modern wire cut brick. In conjunction with the brick walling there are brick vaults and arches. Remnants of stuccoing survive, some having been scored to simulate ashlar with 1'-1" x 3'-8" units. Tabby, a mixture of oyster shell and lime mortar, is used as infill in the rear walls of the bombproofs. In general, the masonry above the level of the terreplein is a product of American rebuilding from 1839 to 1844, as evidenced by the differences in brick work.
 3. Outworks:
 - a. Glacis: A slightly inclined glacis slopes from the counterscarp.

- b. Counterscarp: The counterscarp, with its 2'-10" wide flush cordon which approximates the slope of the glacis, is of a battered construction of brick laid in common bond. The cordon is typically paved with edge laid brick. HABS
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- c. Dry ditch: The existing vegetation and irregular earth fill obscures the original depth and surface of the ditch.

4. Enceinte:

a. Rampart:

- (1) Scarp: Below a large torus moulding of stuccoed, corbelled brick the scarp is battered and has fragments of stucco. Directly below the torus are five equally spaced cement scuppers which drain the terreplein. The scarp wall rises vertically above the torus and forms a flush cordon similar to that of the counterscarp, though it is 3'-1" wide. The cordon is laid at the angle of the superior slope of the rampart, which is constructed of compacted sand and shell matter. An archeological investigation of the superior slope failed in its purpose to locate earlier structures but exposed quantities of eighteenth century Spanish brick and Indian midden rubble. Evidence of vaulted spaces within the rampart was revealed.
- (2) Parapet: The brick parapet extends two feet above an 18" wide cement wash covered base at the level of the superior slope of the rampart. Sections of sheet lead are set into the nineteenth century parapet 2'-6" on center in the vertical joints of the parapet cordon which consists of a header course above two courses of brick laid on edge. The parapet is splayed outward.
- b. Terreplein: The near flat surface of the terreplein is earth where exposed and is approximately 5'-6" below the top of the cordon of the parapet. Granite curb blocks with iron tracks are laid out in thirteen arcs having granite pintle blocks with iron pintles in each and provided the mountings for swivel-type guns.
- c. Revetment: The 1'-6" cordon at the terreplein level of the approximately 10'-0" high revetment is battered to a 2'-0" thickness at the parade level. A vaulted recess near the foot of west revetment steps probably

was a bombproof under the terreplein. An excavation to the west of the recess indicates that there are crudely vaulted spaces under the terreplein which are inaccessible. HABS
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- d. Revetment stairway: Two flights of brick steps from the parade form a common landing at the terreplein level. The stairways parallel the curvature of the revetment and are built into the slope of wall.
- e. Parade: The parade is obscured by fill and masonry rubble from the collapsed south rampart of the firing platform above the bombproofs. In addition to the ruins of a well, there is the postern in the northeast area of the parade to the Fort Barrancas tunnel.
- f. Enclosure at east bombproof entrance: A masonry screen wall, 1'-1" thick, which is stuccoed on each side, extends around the doorway on three sides with an opening in the east wall to the parade. The top of the wall is in ruins, though iron strap ties remain from the cordon seen in the accompanying photocopy of the early photograph. The interior of the enclosure is filled with rubble from the collapsed south rampart of the firing platform.
- g. Bombproofs: The three bombproofs are approximately 12'-4" x 24'-9" and are barrel vaulted. Though the bombproofs are partially filled with rubble and sand from the collapsed south rampart of the firing platform, there are remnants of foundation walls, patches of tabby and brick in the north walling, and various joist and beam pockets in the masonry. Two segmentally arched openings are located in the walling between each vault. A segmentally arched opening with a wooden frame is located in the east wall of the east vault and opens into an area enclosed under the firing platform steps. Additional doorways open from the south wall of each vault. Each opening has a segmentally arched head and interior concave reveals and head. Fragments of pintle hinges indicate inswinging doors, hung below wooden lintels and above brick sills. The surround is stuccoed and there are remains of a label lintel motif over each doorway. The collapse of the south rampart of the firing platform exposed the construction which consists of three segmental vaults which span from the crown of the barrel vaults and support the parapet of the firing platform. Drains were located at the barrel vault intersections. A circular ventilation opening or roundel is located over each south doorway of the bombproofs. The stucco detailing of the exterior of

the bombproofs destroyed in the collapse of the rampart is indicated on the accompanying photocopy of the early photograph.

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h. Firing platform:

- (1) Stairway: The 11'-6" wide brick steps with 8" risers and 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " treads rises beside the east bombproof from a solid base which supports a segmentally arched soffit. Stucco finish on the east wall is scored to simulate ashlar. The steps, which rise between a closed stuccoed, masonry stringer and the east wall of the collapsed rampart of the firing platform, narrow at the firing platform around a baffle protecting the east banquette.
- (2) Rampart: The rampart of the firing platform, the south wall of which has collapsed into the parade, was sand filled and capped with a concrete superior slope construction. The west rampart is in place. The east rampart consisted solely of parapet, which is generally intact around the firing platform.
- (3) Banquette: A banquette, two steps above the floor of the firing platform, extends around the approximately 4'-0" high parapet wall on all sides except where it is interrupted at the stairway. A vent from the central vault extends through the banquette.
- (4) Drain: An open drain is located at the center of the brick paving of the firing platform and is connected to a drain along the east edge where it drains into an opening in the floor at the northeast corner.

- i. Traverse wall: The traverse wall extends between points beyond the ditch and counterscarp at the northwest corner to the scarp at the northeast corner. The wall functions as a retaining wall and a high parapet for the rear defense of the battery. The firing platform provided the vantage point for the defense. The traverse wall has a flush cordon of edge laid brick with granite blocks set at the terminal ends. A battered wall intermediate platform extends from the traverse wall and along it on either side of the firing platform. The intermediate platform, approximately 7'-0" above the terreplein and 5'-6" wide, is beveled and concrete capped near the edges of the traverse wall.

- j. Postern: A semicircular arched doorway in the traverse wall at the parade level is partially closed with modern masonry and sand fill. Three stepped barrel vaults open through the intermediate platform masonry. The reveals and vaulting are stuccoed. A 7'-1" x 19'-2" sconce, segmentally vaulted, parallels the traverse wall on the north side and extends to the east from the segmentally vaulted tunnel which leads to the south scarp of Fort Barrancas where it passes beneath the riflemen's gallery to an arched opening at the Fort Barrancas parade.

- C. Site and Surroundings: Bateria de San Antonio is located on the south side of the peninsula between Bayou Grande and the Pensacola Bay. It faces the entrance channel from the Gulf of Mexico into the bay. The bateria is situated on an incline above the shoreline approximately 60'-0" south of Fort Barrancas. The terrain is sandy and has paths and markers laid out for tourists around the counterscarp from a parking area. The dry ditch is filled with scrub growth and vines as is much of the enceinte.

Prepared by F. Blair Reeves, AIA
HABS--Pensacola
August 3, 1968

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project, sponsored by the Pensacola Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission, now known as the Historic Pensacola Preservation Board of Trustees, in cooperation with the Historic American Buildings Survey, was recorded during the summer of 1968 in Pensacola under the direction of James C. Massey, Chief of HABS; Professor F. Blair Reeves, AIA (University of Florida), Project Supervisor; and Student Assistant Architects John O. Crosby (University of Florida), David L. Van de Ven, Jr. (Texas Technological College), and Edward Bondi, Jr. (University of Florida). The historical information was prepared by Professor Samuel Proctor (University of Florida), by Assistant Historian Linda V. Ellsworth (Historic Pensacola Preservation Board), and by Rodd L. Wheaton (Architect, HABS) who edited all the data in 1972.